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592 daughter; 4 his son and wife; 5 place reserved for animals. In this case, the half-sister has not transferred her share of land to her brother but rents it to him.

596 There is no institutionalized economic co-operation between the members of an extended family, if they are not living in one house. If they are on good terms, economic mututal assistance in borrowing money, animals, or crops may take place. Indeed it is significant that the extended family is not resorted to as much for economic help as has been expected. The economic strength of the extended family and the harmonious relationships between its members are not what is usually assumed by writers on social affairs in Egypt.[1]

However, the unity of the extended family is expected in questions related to public and formal occasions. The extended family is publicly responsible for the general conduct and certain disciplinary measures to redress the offences of its members against law and order, as we shall see later. Members of the extended family are also expected to render support to each other on occasions of offering hospitality, at circumcision, wedding or funeral ceremonies. On the whole, the extended family could be regarded as an intermediate social unit between the conjugal economic family and the clan, shouldering the social responsibility for the smaller units and held accountable for their behaviour before the clan. It is only on the social level of public issues that public opinion in the village considers the family as a nucleus of blood relatives surrounded by a fringe of spouses.[2]

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613 The extended families merge into the clan, and the village is composed
616 of nine clans (kabail), each tracing its descent in the patrilineal line to one common ancestor. Further, the nine clans are grouped in two main sections (hissa), each section belonging to a common progenitor, the two progenitors being brothers. One section is called 'Onab related to 'On, the brother of Mousa who is the progenitor of the Musiab section. The 'Onab section is divided into five clans, named: Diabab, Hasaballab, M'alliab, Waznab and Gharamab, whilst the Musiab is divided into four clans called: Marazik, 'Atamni, 'Amrab and Brahimab.[3]

616 It is locally accepted that each section represents half the population of the village, with the majority of the Musiab having their residence in the northern part, while the majority of the 'Onab reside mainly in the southern part. Between the two sections there is complete freedom of intermarriage

[1] The writer is under the impression, from his general observation, that the extended family seems to be stronger and more effective as an economic unit amongst big landowning families as distinct from what obtains in Silwa, a community of small landowners.

[2] Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man*, p. 159.

[3] Ab, the termination of the names of these clans, according to C. G. Seligman and Brenda Seligman, cannot be the Arabic ab—father. The suffix is common among the Beja tribal names. 'The Kababish, a Sudan Arab Tribe', *Harvard African Studies*, Vol. II, 1918, footnote, p. 113.

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and social exchange. Each of the two sections is supposed to be characterized by certain attributes; the Musiab being renowned for their boasting and self-pride, and heavy-built members, while the 'Onab are reputed to be comparatively stingy and much inclined to gossip.

There are no formal heads of clans but there are natural leaders who are spontaneously appointed on occasions from the oldest members. The distinctive hallmark of every clan is its guest house, where the adult members of the clan have their communal meals during the fasting month of Ramadan, receive a common guest, settle disputes, meet for ordinary gossip and can celebrate their feasts, ceremonies and funerals. On one hand, the clans are aware of their integral identity; and on the other hand, they are aware that they are linked together by a common ancestor forming the unity of the village.

Silwa Kibli (Southern Silwa) and its neighbouring villages are inhabited by the descendants of 'Ayyash the third brother of 'On and Musa. This genealogical relationship is the explanation given to the similarities in customs and traditions between the two parts of Silwa Kibli and Silwa Bahari.

The genealogical pattern goes on to repeat itself still further to include and explain the relations and similarities in the larger socio-geographic region extending throughout the whole province. Apart from the towns 'where people are mixed', most of the villages of this region are inhabited by either the G'afra or 'Ababda. While the G'afra are the descendants of G'afar al-Sadik whose great-grandfather was the grandson of the Prophet, the 'Ababda are the descendants of 'Abdullah ibn al-Zubair who belonged to the Kuraish clan, the Prophet's clan, but was not so close in kinship or favour to the Prophet. The G'afra consider themselves more hospitable than the 'Ababda; and they are also distinguishable as farmers, while the 'Ababda, even if they are farmers at present, were originally camel-drivers.

Moreover the G'afra region is divided into two parts: those villages lying along the eastern bank of the Nile are descendants of Bahr (amongst whose sons were 'On, Musa and 'Ayyash), while those stretching along the western bank of the Nile are the descendants of Buhair, the brother of Bahr. The diagram overleaf represents the ramification of kinship in the region of G'afra and Silwa.

It is clear from this that not only the village, but the whole region represents a ramified genealogical tree, having one main trunk. It is also significant that this ramification is related to the branching off of brothers who were not in agreement, e.g. in the division of East and West in the whole region, in the division of the two parts of Silwa (South and North) and in the division of Silwa itself into two sections. This could be taken as a recognition of a deep-seated cultural expectation of brothers' discord, in spite of the highly idealized expectation of fraternal solidarity.

The genealogical pattern, based on the unilateral descent, repeats itself

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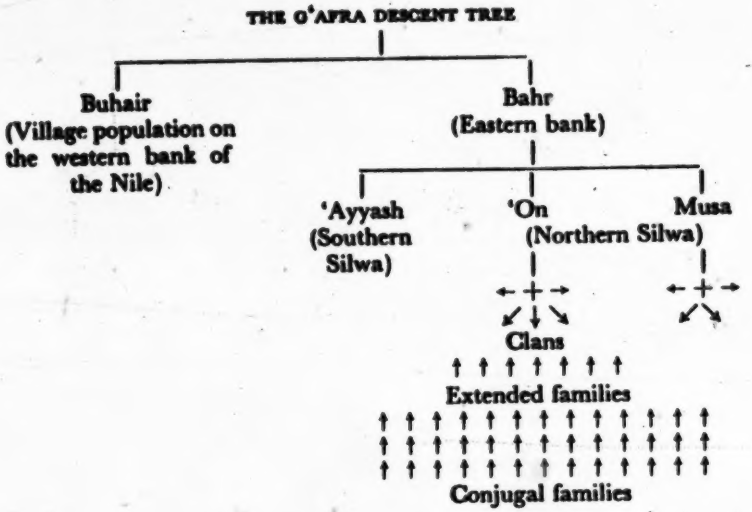
621 The genealogical pattern, based on the unilateral descent, repeats itself with diminishing range throughout the social structure of the village down to the smallest unit. The village is divided into two parts, each of which is subdivided into clans, and these in turn are composed of a number of extended families.[1] The whole structure of the village, as well as that of the 619 whole socio-geographic region of G'afra, could be likened to a centrifugal mechanism spreading out and out in ever-widening circles. Certain common structural norms of behaviour permeate the various segments of the centrifugal structure, manifesting themselves in varying degrees and in different circumstances.[2]



596 186 Pride of belonging to a particular family, especially more obvious in the circle of the extended family, reflects itself in one's pride in the clan, the section, the village, and in the holy descent of the G'afra stock. In the case of extended families, pride manifests itself in possessing a common horse which runs in races held on the celebration of saintly occasions, in having 613 a name for hospitality, or for scholarship and piety. Pride of clan is linked 616 with activities in the guest house, or co-operation in digging a well. Pride 186 in one's section is revealed on communal celebrations especially during the celebration of the Prophet's birthday; each section proclaiming that it has carried it out in a more spectacular manner as each usually has its 'marquee' for listening to the recital of Koran and mawals (popular songs). At 619 186 the level of the G'afra as such, the sense of pride reveals itself in their holy

[1] See Nadel, 'Beni-Amer. Society', *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 1, 44.

[2] The word 'structural' here is used in the sense employed by Bateson to denote standardised details of behaviour. *Naven*, p. 23.

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ancestry. Marriage outside the stock must be with those who can claim an equally holy descent.

The second important norm that governs the whole social structure is the weight and respect given to, and the authority wielded by, the person who plays the role of the senior, normally chosen on age basis as well as on capacity to speak and argue well, besides other factors such as economic status and social prestige. This pattern which, in the smallest unit, is the authority of the father is extended to the oldest capable member of the extended family, to the head of the clan, and to the village councils that congregate spontaneously, having no formal composition.

The third aspect which asserts itself in the various units of the social structure is the feeling of fellowship. The individual finds himself consciously or unconsciously merged into the group. Starting in this case with the largest unit of G'afra as a whole, one is not surprised to find that no elaborate electioneering campaign is required to persuade the G'afra villages to vote for the candidate who belongs to their stock. In fact, the same candidate for Silwa constituency (including the town of Edfu) has won the last three elections with a sweeping majority, irrespective of the political views of his opponents. Throughout the whole of Silwa region, the opposing candidate had never secured more than a hundred votes out of at least three thousand. The rule is that the people of Silwa should vote for their 'paternal cousin'. Yet in the last elections another candidate from the G'afra, the official holder of the ancestry register and a religious man whose grandfather was the leader in the mystic order of the village, stood for the elections to compete with the previous member [1] The reason for that, I was told, is that they once had a heated argument as to whose father was the more respected and honoured man amongst the G'afra. It was also generally believed that the new candidate was encouraged by the 'Ababda. The G'afra split their votes between the two, neither thereby winning the elections. This is strong evidence that kinship relations, and not party politics, decide the issue of the elections in this community.

On the clan level, the sentiment of fellowship shows itself in all the activities connected with the guest house. Suppose a distinguished guest has come to the guest house, e.g. a well-known religious man, or a man with social prestige from a neighbouring town; it is not only one man who receives him, but as many as possible of the heads of the extended families of the clan; and he might be invited by more than one clan. The money for the slain ram (dabiha) is collected from the heads of the families and called 'firda'-spread. The meal is cooked, each family providing its bread; meat and vegetables are provided from the 'common pot', and then they take their round trays to the guest house. The same happens with tea. Clan fellowship takes place during the night entertainments that are held

[1] In Silwa there is a strong connection between political authority and religious authority. This theme has been brought out clearly in E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*, O.U.P., 1949.

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during the month of Ramadan, when families co-operate in providing the 'Koran reciter' as well as other guests with tea and food.

Identification with the clan sentiment shows itself in cases of murder, where the clans of both the murderer and the murdered are involved. It is the obligation of the father, son, brother, uncle or paternal cousin to call for vengeance and for the clan to support him, either by claiming compensation (which, however, is seldom accepted if the claim is acknowledged) or by counter-murder, as the Koran ordains that murder should be punished with murder. The two clans through the mediation of another clan have to settle the dispute by deciding the compensation, called 'dia'.

This is no Durkheimian merging of the individual into the group. It is simply a statement of the compelling moral law that the individual, to be in line with the group, should express group-sympathy; if the group is angry, he should be angry, if it is insulted, he must feel that he is insulted.

This pattern of social structure does not apply merely to the Silwa community and the G'afra, but applies in varying degrees to the whole province of Aswan, and many other provinces that are known to the writer in Upper Egypt. In all this, the bond of common descent and family connections is one of the strongest factors as well as the most socially effective force in the social structure.

The village could also be classified into social groups on the basis of age. From the standpoint of age there are three broad social groupings. The first is referred to as 'youngsters' (jahhal), including all boys and girls up to the age of twelve or thirteen years. The second is the unmarried group (fityan), and the third is represented by the married adults, referred to as 'men or women'.

In public there is no free mixing between these three categories as it is considered 'impolite' for a youngster to sit with men, for example, and the converse would be shameful. Youngsters can only be seen in an adult gathering serving tea, or holding the ablution laver and ewer, or as messengers. In the case of young boys, they are marked by their head cap, while unmarried boys wear a turban, and the men besides a turban wear a 'tob' which is a black outer garment, and usually carry a stick or a stave.

Apart from segregation and dress, the age criterion shows itself in outward behaviour, by considering the older people as equivalent to the paternal uncle, or as fathers, or grandfathers if they are very old. Often older people are addressed by the kinship term 'Ammy' (O my paternal uncle), especially if one wants to be 'polite'. If one does not use the kinship term one has to address the older person by the title 'Sheikh' preceding his first name.

Sex is another criterion for two definite social groups: the world of men, and the world of women. In this community it is unthinkable to have free mixing between the two worlds, or that a thing done by one sex can also be done by a member of the other sex. Men have their scope of activities either in the fields or outside the compound, the women are mainly con-

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I have a thousand people besides my paternal and maternal uncles.'
When the patient's mother heard the conversation, she offered the doctor her necklace and bracelets.
When the father heard about this, he offered his land and property.
When the sister heard about this, she offered her anklets and earrings.
When his people (i.e. joint family) heard about this, they said 'We shall all pay it with no fuss or difficulty'.

This support shows itself not only when the relatives and friends go to visit the sick person in the village, irrespective as to whether the disease is infectious or not, but also when they visit him in hospital in town. If the person recovers from a serious illness, or comes back home after being away for some time, the people go to congratulate him for his recovery or for his return home by saying 'Let us thank God for your safety'. 608

To take another example, if a cow or a camel has been seriously injured in an accident, it is killed, and the owner's relatives, neighbours, and friends are morally compelled to buy a portion of the meat to part-compensate for the loss. If a person's animal dies he is consoled by others with the invocation 'May God compensate you'.

Death is another major event in which the family finds itself supported by condolences and sympathies of kinsfolk. If the deceased belongs to the category of youngsters, condolence is compulsory on the clan and intimate friends only. If he belongs to the second and third categories of age groups (unmarried or adults) the whole village has to condole with the sufferers. In death, more than in any other event, kinship ties are the most important factor in deciding one's social obligations. It is incumbent on the close relatives both paternal and maternal, as well as in-laws, to stay away from work and remain in the guest house for ten or fifteen days, and frequently sleep there, or in the case of women, in the house of the deceased relative. Close relatives have to assist in conveying the funeral bier to the cemetery, to mourn the deceased more than others, and to send food to the guest house and to the house of the deceased, normally an obligation more upon the clan house-heads and the close maternal relatives than upon any others. 602 765 [164] [613]

The same solidarities and mutual family and clan obligations manifest themselves on occasions of rejoicing such as birth, circumcision and weddings, by sending gifts, food, by helping in the preparation of the ceremony, or at least by merely attending in the case of men or sending out a joy-cry in the case of women. 602 [431]

Moreover, the social structure functions also as a means of mediation in the sectional frictions that are bound to arise. In the following example, which the writer witnessed, the head members of a clan mediated between 613 627

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613 627 two joint families to 'level all the misunderstandings' between them. The dispute had arisen between the two joint families of 'Amareen and Karamsha, both belonging to the 'Amrab clan, Musiab section. Hag Ahmad 'Imran, the head of the first family, asked the Karamsha to lend him one of their camels to carry some maize straw from the field, but his request was refused because they alleged that they had no camels to spare as they were engaged in building a house. On another occasion, Hag Ahmad 'Imran insisted on taking the camel from one of the Karamsha while he was bringing water to be used in the building; people interfered and the matter was settled for the time being. After three days, he made another attempt and slapped the camel-driver, 'Othman, on the face, cursing his people. 'Othman, the offended man, could not retaliate as Hag Ahmad was the senior man of his family and older than he, and it is 'impolite' according to Arab traditions to slap such a man. People immediately gathered to settle this affair temporarily and prevent any further complications. Then Hag Ahmad's son came on the spot and started to insult 'Othman (who was his brother-in-law) and 'Othman, finding his equal, stood up to the challenge, but people intervened. The dispute, in spite of its temporary ending, had left 'something in the souls of the two houses'.

The 'residue in the souls' came up to the surface when the pilgrims from the clan came back from Mecca and had to be invited by the heads of the clan. The 'Amareen invited the Karamsha to co-operate, but the latter declined. In the meantime, it happened that a member of the Karamsha offered his help for the occasion but was refused by the 'Amareen. This added fuel to the fire and the situation between the two families became tense.

Deputations and mediators went between the two families to fix an 'Arab council' for arbitration. A respected and pious man suggested the family of Badawab for the purpose, but the Karamsha objected on the grounds that the former house was closely related to the 'Amareen. Then the arbitration was raised to the clan level and the Hasaballab clan from 'Onab section (to which neither side belonged) was suggested and this was accepted by both sides. On the appointed evening, the adult members of the two houses came to the Hasaballab guest house, where they were received and tea was served.

[188] The meeting started by the Hasaballab head clansman reciting 'Wahhidouh ya Gamaa—Say that God is one, O gathering'. Everybody present answered, 'There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet'. Then the chosen head of the Hasaballab asked the Karamsha, 'What is your story?' 'Abd-el-Gid, the head of the Karamsha, stated, 'We are claiming duties from the 'Amareen'. Then the head of the Hasaballab proposed that after sitting together in their guest house, the two sides should reconcile 'on the white and the reading of Fatiha', meaning that they should root out the past misunderstandings, and should forget all

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about them without going into any argument. The Karamsha, however, who were the accusers, opposed the suggestion and insisted on their case being heard, and consequently their rights being acknowledged. The argument was stated by the head of the Karamsha speaking and being interrupted by members of the disputing house here and there, as well as by members of his house. Then Hag Ahmad 'Imran began to defend his case, and then free argument took place.

One of the most effective devices in the Arab councils is the so-called 'mulakah' (a getting together), where on any dilemma in the course of argument, one or two persons from the mediators take one person or more from the disputing sides for a 'mulakah' to persuade him in a corner, or another room away from the general meeting, through personal and more intimate hearing to follow what the mediators proposed. Their usual form of pressure is to appeal to the person to 'consider the Arabs, or the people, or his kinsfolk'. The idea behind this device is to avoid any personal embarrassment or retreat in public, as this brings shame ('ar). If the retreat is accepted on a more intimate level, then the person has retreated owing to the pressure brought upon him because of personal ties or to his considerations to the 'Arabs', yet such a formulation of retreat is only implicit.

However, the 'mulakah' which occurred three times during the meeting did not produce the required effects. The Hasaballab, the arbitrating clan, had then to go outside by themselves to agree on 'the rights of the Arabs which no one now should fear to declare'.

The formulation of the verdict is very interesting as an index of the functioning elements of the social structure. The Hasaballab declared two decisions; the first was that Hag Ahmad 'Imran committed a double wrong by slapping 'Othman the camel-driver, and by not preventing, even by slapping, his son from getting entangled with 'Othman. The second decision was that the clan of 'Amrab, to which the two disputing families belong, had committed a mistake by not mediating between the two families in due time.

As the disputants are morally compelled to accept the arbitration of whoever they agree upon to take this part, the 'Amareen had to shake hands with the Karamsha, followed by all present reading the Fatiha.

Yet this was not the end of everything in this Arab council. Hag Ahmad 'Imran, feeling that injustice had been done to him, immediately declared that he 'claimed rights from Hasaballab', meaning that he wanted to sue the arbitrating clan before another clan, a charge which they have to accept. The case now is between the 'Amareen and the Hasaballab, and they both agreed to appoint the 'Awadallab clan in the neighbouring village to take up the arbitration between them.[1] If the Hasaballab's verdict is considered unjust, they have to pay the 'Amareen

[1] If any clan or family is appealed to by both disputing parties for arbitration, it cannot refuse to act.

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ten pounds; otherwise the 'Amareen have to pay the sum of ten pounds. The payment of money actually takes place, but it is always given back to the payer as 'Arab-coffee' and there is no appeal beyond this stage.

The Arab council is the traditional agent for maintaining law and order in the village, and its composition and functioning reflect the traditional concept of authority. Prestige derived from age, experience, and sobriety combined with power attached to landowners and heads of large families who are well known for their hospitality, are the main qualifications for selection in these councils. Although these principles are not rigidly adhered to in the village itself, they are more observed in composing a council to arbitrate in a dispute in another village. Like Chan Kom, Silwa conceives of a hierarchy of power and responsibility. As in Tepoztlan, government is ideally a fatherly discharge of responsibility by the powerful and able to give benefit to all, but with lesser men taking lesser places.[1] These Arab councils vary in their composition according to the gravity of the issue. They are formed frequently and spontaneously to settle disputes, but their proceedings are almost uniform.

Women have similar gatherings for settling feminine disputes, but they are less formal and lack that atmosphere of solemnity that prevails in men's councils. Men's councils, however, could be convoked to settle women's conflicts creating disruption between two houses, and men are expected to plead the case of the women concerned and undertake the responsibility of making them abide by the council's decision.

In the arguments that take place in these councils, one can hardly fail to notice the importance of the mediators appealing to the kinship idioms to minimize the insult or the loss, or the accusers to exaggerate the offence. 'If my cousins, or brothers do so and so, how would others treat me? . . .'

It is also worth noticing that these Arab councils are held irrespective of civil law procedures. In the case of attack on somebody, or damage to fields or animals, the Arab council has to be formed to smooth the relations between the disputants. The norms and procedures of Arab councils are accepted by common consent as the basis of law and order as distinct from legalistic ways. To appeal to a remote and impersonal power vested in the local or national government is not a socially acceptable procedure, as any dispute should first be discussed by the people involved as well as those who mediate between them. My informant, Ali, regretted the fact that people do not nowadays accept reconciliation according to Arab council verdict, as they used to do; and much recourse is made to legal courts by 'brother against brother' and even father against son.

It is also evident that these Arab councils perform a very useful psychological function. By airing disputes, and transferring the offence from one circle to another in the Arab council, aggression is dissipated and diffused.

In settling damages in Arab councils, the amount has to be fixed by the gathering, but it is shameful not to return the compensation (awad) which should be declined by saying 'God compensates me in a better way'.

[1] Robert Redfield, *A Village that chose Progress*, p. 165.